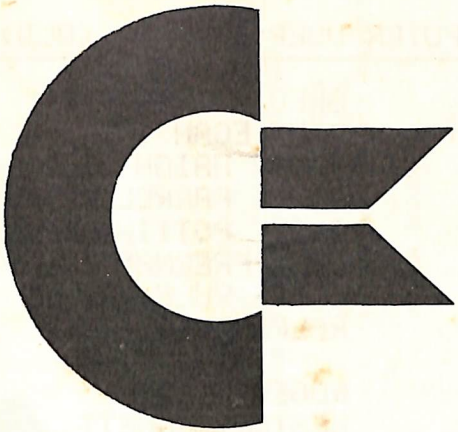
COMMODORE COMPUTER



USERS GROUP

(QLD)

CLUB ROOMS: * MILTON STATE SCHOOL, BAYSWATER ROAD, MILTON *

NEWSLETTER Vol.2 No.4 APRIL 1984

DIARY for MAY

Group meeting on Tuesday, 1st May, 1984 at 7.30 pm in our club rooms.

Workshop meeting on Sunday, 13th May, 1984 from 1 pm till 5 pm in our club rooms, for all Commodore Computers. Bring your own computer gear! Please note that workshop meetings are for members only!

See page 5 for further details.

COMMODORE COMPUTER USER'S GROUP (QLD) DIRECTORY

President:	GREG PERRY	Ph. 38 3295
Secretary/Treasurer:	JOHN EGAN	Ph.287 2705
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VIC Sub-Committee:	ROGER HAIGH	Ph.399 8037
	LESTER BENNETT	Ph.200 1243
	JULIANNE FALLEN	Ph. 30 2982
	MILES OHLSON	Ph. 44 8400
	DAVID PAIGE	Ph.353 2484
CBM 64 Sub-Committee:	TERRY STEER	Ph.209 3449
	CAMERON ARNOTT	Ph.369 1390
	MAX BEAN	Ph.208 1225
	RODNEY FINLAYSON	Ph.356 5927
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	KAYLENE & JOHN EGAN	Ph.287 2705
	PETER REEVE	Ph.378 2665

Please contact Committee members of the relevant Sub-Committee as regards specific computer problems.

To ensure a prompt reply when contacting committee members by mail, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope!

All editorial matter for next month's issue has to be in the possession of the editor no later than the second Tuesday of that month. Editorial address: 24 Kaloma Rd. The Gap, Brisbane, 4061.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the Author(s), and not necessarily those of the C.C.U.G.(Q) or the Editor.

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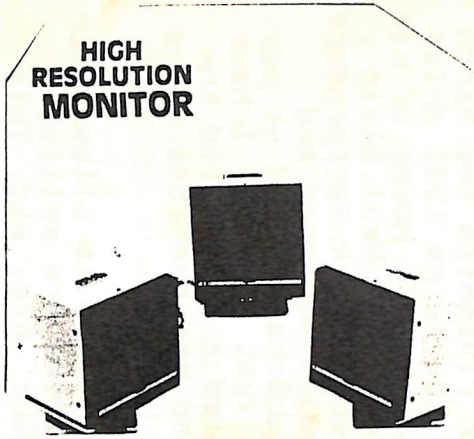
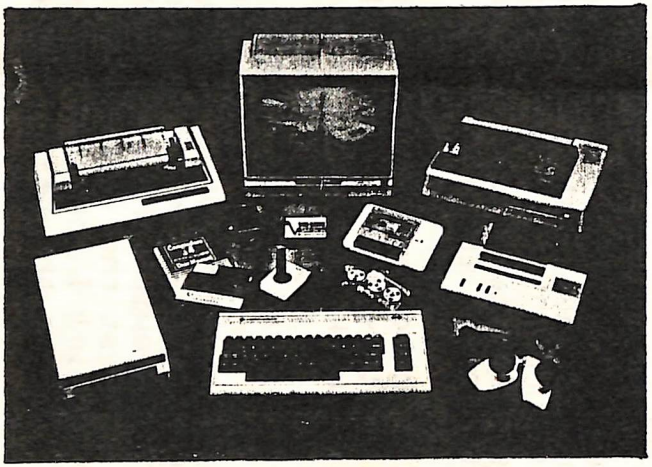
CONTACT:
LES VAN TOVIER
PHONE:
221.7822



NO MORE HEADACHES AND BLURRED VISION

THE CITY'S LARGEST RANGE OF SOFTWARE



SEE US FOR YOUR HARDWARE

BROS HR15 PRINTER
RS. 232 INTERFACE
EP-44 DOT MATRIX PRINTER
GREEN SCREEN
AMBER SCREEN

43 ADELAIDE ST. CITY. CONTACT: LES VAN TOVIER PH: 221.7822

CHANDLERS

EDITORIAL

It had to happen! Immediately after finishing the March issue of this newsletter I had occasion to use my 1541 drive for an extended period. Sure enough after some 6 hours of use she started to make those horrible noises which Paul Blair described so well in his article! I tried out the performance test, and sure enough the drive would no longer read and write to track 1. The good people at HILLS have fixed it now, but I also took out a service contract, just in case! I have followed Paul Blair's advice and installed a fan behind the drive, which I switch on when I intend to use the 1541 for a long session.

A thought: Copying of commercial software is illegal (or is it in Australia?), yet dealers everywhere are selling clones of "FROGGER", "STARTREK", "SCRAMBLE" etc. etc. This type of legal pirating goes on everywhere, yet nobody seems to mind. Strange is it not?

I had high hopes of using a new printer to use in the production of this newsletter (an Epson RX-80), but things did not quite work out this way. After lots of promises I managed to get neither the printer nor the appropriate interface. As I had disposed of my 1526 printer in the meantime I was forced with the prospect of laboriously typing out the total contents of this newsletter - a rather daunting task indeed! As a last resort I purchased a Commodore MPS801 printer, and herewith the result. Not as versatile as the 1526, and I detest the lack of descenders on p's, q's etc, but don't despair! I hope to have a new character ROM chip fitted by the time the next issue reaches you, which will result in improved readability.

RALPH DE VRIES

NOTES & GOSSIP

PROGRAMMING COURSES

Derrek Farrell will start an ADVANCED BASIC PROGRAMMING Course on Monday 7th May in our club rooms. It will run over a period of 6 weeks, at an approximate cost of $35 - $40.

After the completion of this course it is hoped to start the course on MACHINE LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING.

If you would like to participate in either of these courses, or find out more details, contact Derek Farrell at 359 8559 after working hours.

MAY LECTURES

At our meeting on Tuesday, 1st May we hope to have an

"Explanation on the use of the"
Machine Language Monitor

REGIONAL MEETINGS

During our last meeting it was decided not to change the format of our present meeting schedule (i.e. regular meeting first Tuesday of the month and workshop meeting 12 days later on the Sunday).

If members in a particular suburban location wish to start a sub-group a notice will go in this newsletter to that effect.

The first of these sub-groups will be run in the Woodridge area on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7.30 Pm in the Springwood Pre-School, Dennis Rd. Springwood, 300 yards up from the service lane.

For further details contact Terry Steer at 209 3449 after working hours.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE

We are now supplying Public domain software such as the Commodore Software Development Kit, educational programs etc. on diskettes at $5.00 each.

A complete listing of the contents of every disk would take up far too much space in this newsletter, but this information can be obtained from our librarian Cliff Pottinger, who also looks after the sales of these disks.

Public domain cassette tape programs for the 64 are still available for $2.00 each from Terry Steer.

SPEED SCRIPT WORD PROCESSOR

There are some mistakes in the article on the above. The cursor keys were incorrectly labeled on Figure 1. Table 1 on Page 52 is missing CTRL.= which returns the amount of free memory.

Table 2 is missing the command for line spacing. First type CTRL-£ (or CTRL-3), then enter [s] followed by a number 1,2 or 3 to set line spacing.

DO NOT USE the [n] command for next page, as it does not work!

For further details see the May issue of Compute's! Gazette.

COMMODORE'S NEW COMPUTERS

In last month's newsletter we gave you some details of the new 264 and 364 computers. The 264 was to be released in the USA on April 1, but guess what?

According to 'COMPUTE' magazine (April 1984) the new computers are being delayed indefinitely! Yes, we have heard it all before!!!

COMPACT DISC PLAYERS

"Well, what have those things to do with computers", you may well ask. Probably more than is apparent at first sight. The information is encoded digitally (ones and zeroes), as is the information in our computers. I will not go into the technical details here, but suffice it to say that a compact disc is rather similar to a floppy disk. Every compact disc has a directory track, as can also be found on our floppies. This has track and sector information encoded on it, which is read first, prior to playing the actual disk. In turn the user decides which particular track or tracks he wants to hear, all depending on the memory facilities built into the particular unit.

The actual playback units have been on sale now for 12 months. The first units available were priced from $1000 to $2000, but now base models have come down to $600, and we can expect further reductions in time to come.
I have been fortunate enough to be able to try out 3 different units over a period of time, and also purchased some 15 odd discs, to try out the system.

Last month I took the plunge and purchased my own unit. This was a second generation SONY machine, model CDP 11S. It had all the features that I required, and the specifications were identical with the original SONY unit which was released some 12 months ago.

To my horror I found that this unit would not track all my discs properly. I took the unit back to my dealer with two of the so-called faulty discs. We tried out another SONY unit with similar results, but then we tried the same discs on an NAD and HITACHI player, which tracked the discs perfectly! Of course I was not very happy after spending $800, and than to find that the unit was not doing its job. It went straight into SONY's service department, but when it came back the unit would still not track the discs in question. I had a chat with their technician, who told me that my unit had been adjusted to its maximum level, but he admitted that certain discs would not track on certain units.

I was extremely unhappy about the situation, but my dealer came to the party by exchanging the SONY unit for an NAD unit (this one was more expensive and cost me another extra $160!).

Well, what is the moral of this tale? The new Compact Disc at it's very best is an absolute marvel, but there are problems. At first it was announced that these discs were impervious to dirt, dust and scratches. Not so. The laser beam that reads the disc has got built-in error correction circuitry, which is transmitted to the servo motor drive(s). Depending on the sophistication of this error correction device the unit will either make the necessary corrections for errors encountered during it's travels across the disc, or mistrack. This can cause jumping over sections of a track or repeating a section ad infinitum.

If any of you are contemplating purchasing one of these units I would caution you to go very easy. Most Hi-Fi salesmen are not aware of the pitfalls of this new system, and I fear that some of the cheaper units now coming on the market may be troublesome. You have been warned!

One last point: my dealer tried to return his units to SONY for credit or replacement. They refused, because they were co-inventors of the system, so they must be perfect!

RALPH DE VRIES

A NEW AUSTRALIAN COMMODORE MAGAZINE

COMMODORE REVIEW Issue 1 March 1984 $3.00
Published by Gareth Powell Pty. Ltd.

The first issue of this new magazine is a disaster. After two introductory pages by Gareth Powell we have a reprint of a 'COMPUTE'S GAZETTE' program, with only half the listing conventions, which the GAZETTE uses, included.

This is followed by a review of Calc Result (no prices and no mention if this is Calc Result Easy or the Advanced version.), Easy Spell (no prices again) and Easy Script (again no prices, and when Mr Powell writes about formatting he should have used the Video output facility of Easy Script, as four lines of text appears about 30 lines too early!).

Next we have a review of Superbase (yes, you guessed it, no prices again, nor does it tell you if this is Superbase 64 or Superbase for the 700 series), followed by some Commodore games reviews, again without prices.

This is followed by some of Mr Powell's re-writes of articles, previously published in the Weekend Australian.

But on the last page comes the best of all! There is a copy (2 versions, VIC and 64) of the Automatic Proofreader, again from COMPUTE'S GAZETTE, without explaining that this program is to be used only for typing in programs from the GAZETTE, which include REM numbers in their listings, which have to be compared with the numbers generated by the Automatic Proofreader. On it's own the Proofreader is a complete waste of time!

Surely Mr Powell, you can do better than this! Off hand I can think of several Commodore users who have all contributed substantially to getting more out of Commodore machines. For your benefit here are their names:

GREG PERRY, president of our group, who has done some very interesting work with sound and graphics on the 64. Just now he is completing a M/C program listing routine, which will make Commodore programs much easier to read.

RALPH DOWN, president of the Southport Commodore Users Group, who, in conjunction with Paul Blair is producing an improved Character Rom Chip for the 801 printer, to give descenders on lower case letters.

PAUL BLAIR of the Canberra Users Group, who has written more articles on Commodore than I care to mention.

These are only a few of the knowledgeable Commodore users in Australia. Obviously there must be lots of others in this country. How about recruiting some of these Mr Powell? After all, an Australian magazine should have some Australian material, rather than re-writes of overseas articles.

RALPH DE VRIES

CBM 64 NOTES

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

Supplied by courtesy of Chandlers, 43 Adelaide St. B'ne.

'BLUE MAX' (Synapse Software - Cassette - $43.95)

You are Max Chatsworth, known as "Blue Max", famous British WW1 fighter ace. Your job is to bomb enemy buildings, bridges, cars and ships, and fight off enemy planes and anti-aircraft fire.

I have developed an intense dislike of all the look-alike "shoot or be shot" space games, but this one is far superior to most of these, because, apart from bombing, shooting, and warding off the enemy, there are many other factors to take into account. You have to land fairly regularly to re-fuel, stock up on bombs etc. Than you have to worry about take-off and landing speeds, wind factors etc. All relevant information is displayed on the screen, but at times you could do with an extra pair of eyes! The 3-D scrolling landscape is very well done, (notice the shadow of the bi-planes on the ground), the sound effects don't grate too much on your nerves, and all in all I can thoroughly recommend it.

'PIT STOP' (Epyx Software - Cartridge - $42.95)

A car racing game for up to 4 players. The idea of the game is to run a race on one of 6 famous racing circuits in the fastest possible time. You do however run out of fuel and your tyres wear out, so during the race you enter your Pit Stop to refuel and change tyres. This is where you lose time of course, but with practice you learn to do this faster and faster. Once your car is in running order again you rejoin the race. Success largely depends on how well you judge the necessity to return to the Pit Stop. Tyre wear is shown in changing colours of the tyres, and a fuel gauge shows the amount of petrol left. If your tyre(s) blows on the circuit you are finished, as your car explodes!

The game is best played with two or more players to introduce the competitive element, however it seems a shame that every competitor has to wait his or her turn while the current player is doing his thing. I would have liked to see two cars speeding side by side on the track, but regrettably this could not very well be implemented in the present game. Sound and graphics are o.k. Recommended.

'PIPES' (Creative Software - Cartridge - $42.95)

This has taken a long time to hit the Australian market, but here it is at last.
Not really a game, but more of an educational tool. The player is given a certain amount of money to spend on buying a variety of water pipes, such as straight ones, elbows, tee-junctions, cross-pieces and valves. These pipes are used to connect a water supply source to a house (or houses - up to 5 allowed). The idea is to use the minimum amount of pipes to inter-connect the houses to the water supply.

Not being an educational expert, I should imagine that this program is mainly aimed at the 8 - 12 year age group. The instructions are rather skimpy, but I feel sure that the average youngster will soon figure it all out.

In the USA this one has been very highly commended for it's educational value, and who am I to argue with the experts!

ATTENTION You JUMPMAN freaks!!:

I have just seen at Chandlers "Jumpman Junior", the cartridge version of this well known game with another 12 new levels of challenging difficulties! Should be great fun.

RALPH DE VRIES

'PAPER CLIP 64' WORD PROCESSOR
(Batteries Included - Disk & Security Key - Appr. $100.)

This word processor, manufactured by the Canadian firm with the funny name (see above) is no joke.

This package is supplied on disk with a security key (dongle), which is plugged into the joystick port. Without the key the program will not run, but the advantage is that the user can make his own back-up copies. In fact the program disk includes two back-up programs for that purpose. A very substantial instruction book comes with the package.

To mention all the features of this program would take up to much space, but I will try to summarise the differences between Easy Script and this program.

To start with the instruction book. I feel that for beginners the E.S. book is a lot easier to comprehend. P.C.'s book is good, but definitely not for beginners. One flaw that comes to mind is the commands that either use a 0 or an O. The printed text does not distinguish between them. E.S. supplies a summary card with most commands listed. This is very handy to have beside you when using the word processor. P.C. do provide a listing of their commands in the book, but one will have to make a photocopy of same, if you don't want the book around.

As regards the actual features implemented in both programs, they have a lot in common, but P.C. does have some very nice extra features. E.S. uses mainly the F1 key for the editing mode and the F3 key for formatting commands. Other function keys are used as well. P.C. uses the CTRL key for editing functions, the back arrow key for escape sequences, and use is also made of the f key, Run/Stop key and Commodore key. The F2,F4 and F6 key are used for setting screen colours etc. E.S. will allow larger text files to be saved than P.C. (764 screen lines in E.S. against 511 screen lines in P.C.). E.S. saves files as sequential files, and P.C. as program files. However P.C. is also able to dump the program as a sequential file, so you can have the best of both worlds.

The real advantages of P.C. start when you are using a non-Commodore printer, because it is a simple matter of pressing the Escape key (back arrow) in conjunction with another key to get into italics mode, sub- or superscript, underline, boldface etc. etc.

On the program disk are a large quantity of special printer files, which you can merge with the main program. If your special printer is not listed, you can make up your own specially personalized printer file.

Strangely enough the Commodore 1526 printer is not listed, only the 1525 printer.

P.C. will also move columns of text around (this can not be done on E.S.- lines of text only), and simple addition and subtraction of these columns can be done from within the program. Columns of names, addresses etc. can also be sorted from within the program.

Another feature not found in E.S. is automatic indentation of new paragraphs, and inserting text is better implemented in P.C.

P.C.'s book does not list default values of it's printing functions - a serious omission. The maximum file length is not listed in the book either.

One of the very best features of P.C. however is the ability to pre-view one's text in 80-column format. Yes, 80-columns on the screen! On E.S. you have to scroll the screen horizontally to view 80 columns, but in P.C. it is simply a matter of pressing the F8 key to see those 80 columns. The quality is not very good, but legible all the same, and is a feature which I will use extensively.

All in all Paper Clip is an excellent Word Processor. I do feel though that Easy Script is easier to use for the first-time user, but if you do require the extra features that Paper Clip offers, you will not regret it's purchase.

'AN INTRODUCTION TO BASIC - PART 2'
(Commodore - Cassette - $40.00)

Here it is at last. Announced a full 12 months ago, it was well worth the wait. Carrying on where part 1 left off it takes you right through all the advanced aspects of Basic Programming.

Disk drive owners should try to get the disk version however, as several program modules are specifically tailored for use with either data cassettes or data disks. Thoroughly recommended.

RALPH DE VRIES

SUPERMON 64

Instructions

.A simple Assembler
.D Disassembler
.F Fill memory
.G Go run
.H Hunt memory
.L Load from tape or disk
.M Memory display
.P Printing disassembler
.R Register display
.S Save to tape or disk
.T Transfer memory
.X exit to basic

- Simple assembler

```
.A 2000 LDA #$12
.A 2002 STA $8000,X
.A 2005 (RETURN)
```

In the above example the user started assembly at 2000 hex. The first instruction was load a register (the accumulator) with immediate 12 hex. In the second line the user did not need to type the .A and address. To exit the assembler type a RETURN after the address prompt. Syntax is the same as the disassembler output.

- Disassembler

```
.D 2000
(Screen clears)
2000 A9 12      LDA #$12
2002 9D 00 80   STA $8000,X
2005 AA         TAX
2006 AA         TAX
```

(Full page of instructions

Disassembles 22 instructions starting at 2000 hex. The three bytes following the address may be modified. Use the CRSR keys to move to and modify the bytes. Press return and the bytes in memory will be changed.

Supermon64 will then disassemble that page again

```
- Printing disassembler
.P 2000,2040
2000 A9 12        LDA #$12
2002 9D 00 80     STA $8000,X
2005 AA           TAX

     . . . .

203F A2 00        LDX #$00
```

To engage printer, set up beforehand - OPEN 4,4:CMD4

```
-Fill memory
.F 1000 1100 FF
```

Fills the memory from 1000 hex to 1100 hex with the byte FF hex.

```
- Go run
.G
```

Go to the address in the PC register display and begin RUN code. All the registers will be replaced with the displayed values.

```
.G 1000
```

Go to address 1000 hex and begin running code.

```
- Hunt memory
.H C000 D000 'READ'
```

Hunt through memory from C000 to D000 for the ASCII string READ and print the address where it is found. A maximum of 32 characters may be used.

```
.H C000 D000 20 D2 FF
```

Hunt through memory from C000 to D000 for the sequence of bytes 20 D2 FF and print the address. A maximum of 32 bytes may be used.

```
- Load
.L
```

Load next program from cassette.

.L "RAM TEST"

Load from cassette the program named RAM TEST.

.L "RAM TEST",08

Load from disk (device 8) the program named RAM TEST. This command leaves BASIC pointers unchanged.

- Memory display

```
.M 0000 0080
.: 0000 00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07
.: 0008 08 09 0A 0B 0C 0D 0E 0F
                . . . .
```

Display memory from 0000 hex to 0080 hex. The bytes following the .: can be altered by typing over them, then typing RETURN.

- Register display

```
.R

     PC   IRQ   SR AC XR YR SP
    0000 E62F 01 02 03 04 05
```

Displays the register values saved when Supermon64 was entered. The values may be changed by typing over them followed by a RETURN.

- Save

.S "PROGRAM NAME",01,0801,0C80

Save to cassette memory from 0801 hex up to but not including 0C80 hex and name it PROGRAM Name.

.S "0:PROGRAM NAME",08,1200,1F50

Save to disk drive 0 memory from 1200 hex up to but not including 1F50 hex and name it PROGRAM NAME.

-Transfer memory

.T 1000 1100 5000

Transfer memory in the range 1000 hex to 1100 hex and start storing it at 5000 hex.

-Exit to BASIC

.X

Return to BASIC ready mode. The stack value SAVEd when entered will be restored. Care should be taken that this value is the same as when the monitor was entered. A CLR in BASIC will fix any stack problems.

ADDITIONAL COMMANDS WITH OTHER MONITORS

Some other versions of monitors allow more commands such as :

.B	Break set		
.C	Compare memory		
.E	Exit	.E	External re-linker
.I	Interpret memory		
.J	Jump to monitor subroutine		
.N	New locater		
.O	Offset or branch calculate	.O	Output diverter
.P	Print switcher	.P	Print screen
.Q	Quick trace		
.U	Test colour RAM		
.V	Verify memory from a device	.V	Verify RAM
.W	Walk code		
."	ASCII Conversion		
.#	Decimal conversion		
.$	Hexadecimal conversion		
.%	Binary conversion		
.&	Checksum memory		
.(	Command end tone		
.+	Addition (Hex)		
.-	Subtraction (Hex)		
.>	Disk directory		
.,	Disassembly modify		
.:	Memory modify		
.;	Register modify		

All or most of these commands are available in Micromon-64, Commodore's Public domain monitor, Hesmon etc. For the correct syntax of each command consult a book on machine language programming but you should be able to work most of them out for yourself.

CLIFF POTTINGER

A NOTE FOR TAPE USERS

I have come to the conclusion that some of the very cheap tapes are possibly of inferior quality for consistently good program saves. It is possible to purchase tapes from as low as 40 cents at times. Since I have been bulk producing our group's public domain tapes I have taken notice of the tapes that have been returned, and conducted very simple tests on them. You may be interested in trying this test yourself.

First you save a program from your computer to several types of tapes but all recorded on the same data cassette recorder. Then put the tapes in a stereo system which has level meters to show the signal output level. On a good quality tape you should find that it goes into overload on your level meter, as the datasette outputs a very high level signal. I have tried six cheap brands of tape and found that only one gave a consistent saturation level on all tapes of this brand tested, and that was G-TAPE (C 60) from GREENCORP in NSW. Of the other brands I tried out, most only showed a 75% output signal on my meters, however one Paricular brand of tape varied from tape to tape to such an extent that it was ridiculous. A 50% to 75% output level was produced on the same reel of tape!!!

G-tape's C-60's cost around $1 which is not expensive, and most of the others I tried cost anywhere from 40 to 75 cents. I also tried a couple of the more expensive tapes that I use for stereo recording and most of them showed a high output level but a few of them were down to appr.90%. Maybe this just means that they are not really suited to the frequency range used by the Commodore Datasette. These tapes perform quite well on music.

I made this last test on expensive tapes because I have noticed that some people use expensive tapes for recording when it is not realy necessary.

In conclusion I would like to say that the above tests would not be considered to be very scientific or used as a basis to condemn certain brands of tape, and for this reason I have only mentioned the name of one low priced brand I found to be of a consistent good quality for computer use.

So when you next step out to buy tapes have a think about what to buy. The group is currently investigating the bulk buying price of G-tapes.

TERRY STEER

C-64 PUBLIC DOMAIN TAPES

For the benefit of our country (and city!) members herewith a complete listing of P/D tapes available at $2 dollars each.

PLEASE NOTE: When ordering these tapes by mail include the following amounts for postage and packing:

$1.00 for 1 cassette.
$1.50 for 2 or more cassettes.

TAPE 11		TAPE 12	
SIDE A	SIDE B	SIDE A	SIDE B
Least Squares	Spell worker	Dr Factor	Paranoid
Defuse	Bap	Air Lander	Poetry
Miser	C-book	Martian	Laser Tower
Sumeria	Match	Typing Pract	Moon Buggy
Quest	Crossroads	Bior. Chart	Flight Simulator
Vocab Quiz	Letter	Kalah	Slalom
Spy	Flight 1	Brain Buster	Fruit machine
Maxit	Joust	Code game	Cats&Dogs
Piano Demo	Clock	Gammon	Simon
Artillery	Math Game	Blackjack	Cosmic Bugs
Treasure Hunt	Numerology	Music Master	Jelly Maze
In Between	Nemisis Tishna	Luna Lander	Dark Star
Editor	Yahtzee		Tank Attack
Trains	Match 2		Martian Invaders
Skier			U.F.O.

Tape 12 (cntd.)
Star Pilot

Tape 13

SIDE A	SIDE B
Mystery Spell	Oil Tycoon
Caves of Ice	HardhatClimber
Plot&Draw to	Bowling Champ
Spiralizer	Superbasic
Diamond Drop	Family Tree
M.C save	Sprite Clock
U-boat	Castle Adven
Prog f keys	Simple Assem
Pathway	MLX
Data base 1	Gaz.ProofRead.
Munch math	Disassembler
Bets	SuperBasicDemo
Goblin	
Mine Field	
Hawkmen	
Domination	

TAPE 14

SIDE A	SIDE B
Math Card	Sound Writer
Grade2 Maths	Auto Line Renumber
Math 1	Line Renumber
Kiddy math	Disk Append
Morgate	Lemonade Stand
Amortize	Tic Tac Pet
Othello	Animal
Artist	Demons of Osiris
Lotto	Mozart
Outpost	Colourbot
Tic Tac Toe	React
Frog Race	Haunted Mansion
Chess Mate	Mosaic Puzzle
64 MON	Poker
RecordKeeper	Typing Derby

TAPE 15

SIDE A	SIDE B
Wedge-64-$7000	Time
Wedge-64-$8000	Poker
Wedge-64-$9000	Portfolio
Wedge-64-$c000	Artillery
SpeedScriptIns	Sprite
SPEED SCRIPT	Tape copier
Micromon-64	Copy files
Supermon 64	INSTRUCTIONS
C-64 ml monit	
Monitor $8000	
Function Keys	
Canyons of Zelas	
Planet Fall	
Stock Game	
Cheque Book	

If any of these programs have similar names to commercial programs then that is where the similarity ends.Most are typed in out of magazines or old Pet converted programs or on very rare occasions written by club members. These programs are also available on disc.Send $5 per disc and which tape you would like on that disk. Same postage applies as for tapes above.

TERRY STEER

A NOTE ON COMPUTER REPAIRS

Since joining the world of computer users I have had so many problems with the hardware side that some club members think that their equipment will pack up if I get within 6 feet of it! Ralph has even christened me "The Wrecker".

Anyway there must be a point to this, and that is that some members have experienced some difficulty in getting repairs done that didn't cost an arm and a leg and had their equipment in A1 condition on completion.

Most dealers or their service agents do good competent repairs, and the odd time you do get your equipment back and find it does not work satisfactorily you should return it, and you will find most dealers and service agents only too pleased to check it out and rectify it.

If you experience genuine problems in getting a satifactory job done then contact a committee member and we will aproach the dealer on your behalf.

SERVICE CONTRACTS

The best thing since sliced bread in my books, given the problems I have had with my 1541 drive.

At the moment I know of only one company (HILLS) which offers service contracts on the 64, VIC, PET,and associated Disk Drives, Datasettes and Printers.

I took a contract out on my drive after the last time it got out of alignment and so have many other club members. The advantages are that anything that does go wrong during the 12 months contract period is repaired at no charge for parts or labor, unless it is a self inflicted problem, i.e. coffee spills, dropping it or tampering with the unit.

I have had my drive back twice, and got one-day service the first time, and the second time I got it back the next day. On both occasions they had plenty of other work, but service contracts get priority over normal work in most instances. So with a contract you can expect possibly a 1 to 3 day wait if all needed parts are on hand. Non-contract work will generally take longer.

Hills ask that anyone who gets a repair done there, and finds it is not quite right, to return it immediately, and they will rectify it.

They do give a 90 day warranty on all their work, whether you have a contract or not.

Generally they do get it right first time though! Which is more than can be said about certain computer equipment manufacturers (no names mentioned of course)!!!

Anyway give some thought to service contracts, especially if you use your equipment a lot. It is a very wise form of insurance.

TERRY STEER

VIC-20 NEWS

VIC GAMES REVIEW

By courtesy of Chandlers - 43 Adelaide St. Brisbane.

The following games are all published by Computer Classics on cassettes and are available at $19.95 each.

'The Secret of Bastow Manor'
'Mystery Island'
'Ice'

This month I reviewed 5 programs in the Computer Classics range. Two were adventure type games - Bastow Manor and Mystery Island. I was disappointed graphic-wise in these, as Bastow Manor had only one drawing and Mystery Island none at all. I had expected more graphics in these games after reading a review in one of the magazines which spoke favourably of Bastow Manor's graphics - perhaps it was the 64 version. Another game in this series (Thermonuclear War Games) provides graphics with each move.

The text part is simple enough, once you find the right words to use, and each level of the game you succeed in getting through moves you into the next part of the program, which loads automatically. Overall not very challenging games.

Rating about 5 out of 10 for these two.

The other game which I reviewed (Ice), is a fast moving game where you are a Penguin and the "meanies" are out to get you. You get rid of them by pushing blocks of ice at them, and when you succeed in removing one lot they come back in ever increasing numbers on the next level. You score points for the blocks you capture, as well as the meanies you get. A tune plays over and over again in the background and gets faster as the game progresses. One rather amusing feature is the big smile on the meanie's face when he gets you.

Rating 8 out of 10 for a fun game.

'The Sorcerer and the Princess'
'Vic Rescue'

Sorcerer is once again a text-only adventure game that takes a bit to get started. Once you find the secret the game itself is quite challenging. By starting out in the forest you attempt to find your way to the ROC's camp where the Sorcerer has imprisoned the Princess in a crystal. Can you rescue her? Quite a game for your thinking caps.

Rating 7 out of 10.

The idea of Vic Rescue is to drop a rescue craft from your mother ship to save the 6 people left below on the planet. The trouble is that you get only 3 ships to rescue them. A fairly impossible task by the time you avoid the meteorites etc. that come across the screen at you. I have at best only succeeded in rescui..... them to date. A fairly hard game to master.

Rating 6 out of 10

Julianne Fallen

SUB-GROUP for CANNON HILL AREA

A new Sub-Group has been proposed for Cannon Hill and surroundings.

The first meeting has been scheduled for Friday 4th May at 7.30Pm, and is to be held at the Cannon Hill State School.

All Commodore Users are welcome. For further details ring Barrie Wilson at 3996204 (after hours).

FOR SALE

1x CW Joystick (used)	$10.00
1x Pointmaster Joystick (new)	$20.00
1x 'Introd. to Basic' Pt.1 (C64)	$15.00
1x 'Easy Script' Word Processor (C64)	$50.00
1x 'Magpie' Data Base (C64)	
(Cartridge + Help Disk + Instruction Book)	
New Price in UK $180.00. Sacrifice	$100.00

Contact Ralph De Vries at 303477

WAS IT YOU?

Were you the person who recently borrowed a "COMPUTE" magazine from our library, and promptly proceeded to rip four pages out of it? If you needed the particular article so badly, couldn't you have made a photo copy of the article for a dollar or less.

Your paricular brand of selfishness (or do we call it meanness?) does nothing for your fellow group members or for our group in general.

Thanks to you, our librarian will now have to order a replacement copy from the USA.

May we suggest that you don't renew your membership next July?

Editor

URGENTLY REQUIRED

A member to volunteer for the position of Honorary Advertising & Publicity Officer.

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